

TOWN OF BLANDFORD

Blandford, Massachusetts 01008

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Blandford
BROADBAND



Detailed Exterior Service Drop and Installation Policy

The Blandford Municipal Light Plant is constructing a fiber optic network in order to provide Internet and telephone service under the name Blandford Broadband, with service provided in partnership with Westfield Gas and Electric's service Whip City Fiber (WCF). In order to maximize the opportunity for townspeople to take service, Blandford Broadband will fund standard residential/commercial (with electric service and a E-911 address), installation costs for up to \$10,000, including connecting to the exterior of the home and installing wiring and equipment inside the home. Residential service includes home businesses.

The Town of Blandford has secured the necessary financial resources to construct the fiber optic distribution network AND to cover substantially all of the costs up to \$10,000.00 to connect households to the network. This policy provides the details for what items are covered by the town and what work would be at homeowner expense.

Definitions

See definitions at end of document.

Deadlines

Deadline Description	Deadline Date
Exterior Service drop without Internet Subscription request deadline	9/30/2021
Exterior Service drop and Interior Installation with Internet Subscription deadline	9/30/2021

Policy Details

- Subsidies as outlined in this policy are guaranteed only for requests received prior to the above deadlines.** This includes subsidies for network extensions, service drops, and interior installations. Subsidies are available only for existing occupied structures such as houses or studios/offices. Requests after the deadline could result in substantial delay in installation and would require the homeowner to cover all of the network extension, service drop, or interior installation costs (see below).
- Requesting an Exterior Service Drop without Internet Service.** To request a residential service drop without Internet service (also called a "cold drop"), a Blandford homeowner must grant Blandford Broadband or its representatives permission to come onto the homeowner's property to survey existing conditions and to install the service drop. The homeowner will be contacted by WCF or their service installer, TriWire, to schedule a visit. Cold drops may only be requested for existing premises with electric service and E-911 address. While it is not necessary to sign-up for an Internet subscription, cold drops will have a lower priority for completion than

requests from customers subscribing to Internet service. Cold drops will be installed only after subscribing customers are connected.

3. **Requesting Exterior Service Drop, Interior Installation, and Internet Service.** To request residential exterior and interior installation, a Blandford resident must sign up for Internet service through the Blandford Broadband/WCF website and agree to all terms and conditions.
4. **Blandford Broadband will pay for designed Exterior Service Drop Costs (aka “drop costs”).** Drop costs include the cost of installing fiber optic drop cable along a path designed by Blandford Broadband from the nearest multipoint service terminal (MST) to a network interface device (NID) attached on the exterior of each premise. Exterior service drops do not require the homeowner to sign up for Internet service, since they merely provide the fiber from the street to the outside of the premise, and without Internet service are considered “cold drops.” Blandford Broadband’s designed paths use the access method of existing electric service connection(s) at each premise (i.e., aerial or underground). Homeowners will be responsible for any incremental costs incurred if they request a path other than that recommended by Blandford Broadband (e.g., underground path where electrical path(s) are aerial and an aerial installation would be less expensive). Blandford Broadband will pay for one Service Drop per Electrical Service per E-911 address. Homeowners may add an additional drop, at their own expense, if an MST is available. **Homeowners not meeting the above deadlines will be responsible for the full costs of exterior service drop costs if they request a drop after the deadline.**
5. **Blandford Broadband will pay for basic Interior Installation Costs.** This includes the costs for:
 - a. Installation of optical jumper from NID to ONT in basement, up to 50 feet in length.
 - b. Installation of CAT6 wire from ONT to first floor, up to 50 feet in length.
 - c. Installation of CAT6 wall-plate.
 - d. Installation of router and WiFi setup (provided by WCF).
 - e. Customer to provide 110VAC electrical outlets at ONT and Router locations.
 - f. Customer to provide any desired battery backup (UPS) at ONT and Router locations.
 - g. Customer responsible for any additional wiring and for interface with other devices.

Customers must sign up for Internet service to schedule an Interior Installation. Interior installations for rental properties will require written permission from both landlord and tenant. Customers will be responsible for any incremental costs for installations other than the above- defined basic installation.

6. **Fees:**

Blandford Broadband will charge a one-time activation fee of \$99 per drop for Internet, Internet and Phone, and Phone only installations. This will be charged on the first bill. The subscription rate for Internet or Internet and phone will be \$85 per month. The subscription rate for phone only will be \$55 per month.

Customers not meeting the above deadlines could be responsible for all costs of basic interior installation if they request installation after the deadline.

7. **New Home Construction:** Newly constructed homes requesting service must have electric service connected to the home by 9/31/2021 to be eligible for the drop policy.
8. All fiber and equipment exterior to the premise, including the NID, remain the property and responsibility of Blandford Broadband.

9. All Interior equipment provided by Blandford Broadband or the ISP (the ONT and Router, respectively) remain the property and responsibility of Blandford Broadband or the ISP.
10. Interior customer premise wiring (CAT6 wire and CAT6 wall-plate) installed at customer's premise becomes the property and responsibility of the customer.

Examples:

1. Single-family home is the only premise on a tax parcel. Home has a basement, and customer wants router on first floor. Customer requests a drop and Internet service by the service drop and interior installation request deadlines. All drop and installation costs (up to \$10,000) will be covered by Blandford Broadband.
2. Home with three living units - main home and two apartments - each with a separate electric service. Homeowner requests drops for all three units but commits to service only for the main home. All three drops would be eligible for subsidized drop installation.
3. If a customer with a cold drop requests service after the deadline above, the customer will be responsible for paying the interior installation costs.
4. Any questions regarding special circumstances should be submitted in writing to the MLP for consideration.

Important definitions:

CAT6 = Category 6 ethernet wiring connecting ONT to Router. CAT6 supports network connections up to 10 Gbps within a premise, providing the ability for future network speed enhancements beyond 1 Gbps.

Cold Drop = An Exterior Service Drop that is installed without or prior to interior installation and Internet service.

Customer Connect = connection from the distribution network at the "curb" through the inside installation of the premise. This Includes exterior service drops and interior installation.

Demarcation Point = The point where the town-owned and maintained network meets the customer's wiring and devices. For a Cold Drop, this is the Network Interface Device (NID). Once interior installation has been completed, the demarcation point is the Optical Network Terminal (ONT).

Distribution Network = fiber from the hub past every premise in town.

Exterior Service Drop = fiber optic cable from the distribution network at the "curb" to the outside of the premise. In most cases, a service drop will consist of a single fiber cable connected at one end to a Multipoint Service Terminal (MST) located along the aerial distribution fiber and connected at the other end to a Network Interface Device (NID), normally attached to the outside wall of the premise.

Gbps = gigabits per second. A measure of the amount of data that can be transferred through a network connection in one second. 1 Gbps is approximately 40 times faster than the fastest satellite Internet available in Blandford, 100 times faster than 4G wireless, 300 -500 times faster than the Verizon DSL connections some Blandford residents have, and 20,000 times faster than a typical dial-up connection.

Hub = central telecommunications shelter at 44 North Central Street, which brings together all of the town's fiber optic cables and houses electronics to connect them back to the Internet.

Interior Installation = fiber from the outside to the inside of the premise, interior wiring, installation and configuration equipment inside customer's premise. This includes an optical jumper cable that connects the NID to an Optical Network Terminal (ONT) device, normally located in the basement of the premise. The ONT will typically be connected to a router located on the first floor of the premise. The router will be supplied either by the Internet Service Provider (ISP)—Westfield Gas and Electric's Whip City Fiber (WCF) service—or the customer. Blandford Broadband recommends use of the router provided by the ISP, since this will enable the ISP to remotely troubleshoot the service and to resolve most service issues without a costly visit to the home.

MST = Multiport Service Terminal. Device at the "curb" that allows drop fibers to be plugged into the distribution network.

Network Extension = an extension of the distribution network onto private property. This is required if poles on private property are more than 170 feet apart. It involves spanning the poles with a stranded steel support cable and brackets, attaching network distribution fiber cables to the support cable, and terminating it with a Multiport Service Terminal (MST) on a pole near the premise(s).

NID = Network Interface Device. Device on exterior of premise that connects exterior drop fiber to an optical jumper.

Optical Jumper = fiber connecting the NID to the ONT.

ONT = Optical Network Terminal. Optical/electronic device inside premise that translates between the optical (light) connection on the fiber network and the electronic network connection needed by computers.

Blandford Broadband = Internet access provided by the Blandford Municipal Light Plant, in conjunction with Westfield Gas and Electric's Whip City Fiber service.

Blandford Broadband Network = fiber optic network and hub connecting premises to the Internet.

Router = electronic device inside premise that allows multiple wired ("Ethernet") and wireless ("WiFi") computers and devices to be connected to the network.

Standard Drop = drop cable from an MST on the distribution network to a NID on a premise along the recommended path designed by Blandford Broadband.